

- » Deciding which digital advertising platform to choose
- » Setting up ads that “boomerang” traffic back to your site
- » Troubleshooting and optimizing your paid traffic campaign

Chapter **10**

Tapping into Paid Traffic

How do you get traffic to your website? This is the number one question that business owners ask about digital marketing. The truth is that getting traffic to a website is not a problem. In fact, thousands of traffic platforms, including Google, Facebook, and Twitter, allow you to buy advertising and would love nothing more than to send traffic to your website. The question isn't how to get traffic; rather, it's what to do with the traffic when you get it. What product or service should you offer? What content should you show your visitors? Should you ask them to give you their contact information or come right out and ask them to buy a product or service?

Paid traffic is available in many forms, such as pay-per-click advertising using platforms like Google Ads, banner ads, and paid ads on social networks that include Facebook and Twitter. Paid traffic is a powerful tool because it helps to build your brand, makes people aware of your products or services, and generates leads and sales for your products and services.

In this chapter, we discuss the major advertising platforms and when you should choose to use each one. We also show you how to set up a powerful form of advertising called retargeting and how to troubleshoot your ad campaigns to get the most out of every campaign you run.

Visiting the Traffic Store

Imagine that you and your sweetheart are browsing through recipes, deciding what to have for dinner tonight. You settle on a rice dish that you've been wanting to try for a while. The only issue is that you have no rice on hand.

How should you proceed? Should you grow the rice for your dinner tonight? That would be ridiculous, right? Instead, you head to the supermarket and buy a package of rice.

Rice is a commodity that is bought and sold every day — and so is website traffic. If you want traffic, you need to go to the traffic store.

After you understand paid traffic, you can quickly test content and offers by turning traffic on and off like a water faucet. This capability is important because it allows you to quickly test new offers, landing pages, and content without waiting on slower traffic sources like SEO and social media. When you start treating website traffic like the commodity it is, you finally have a predictable and reliable source of website traffic.



REMEMBER

No perfect traffic store exists. For instance, your audience may not use certain platforms or your brand may face advertising restrictions on certain platforms (industries such as electronic cigarettes, dating, and dieting encounter such situations). To determine the proper store, you must do research, as we discuss. Also, the strategy and the system we examine throughout this chapter apply to whatever traffic store from which you choose to purchase.

Understanding Traffic Temperature

You move people toward a conversion by creating relationships with them. As you run paid traffic campaigns, you need to understand where you stand in your relationship with your leads and customers. Are they just now learning about you; are they aware of you but haven't bought from you; have they bought from you and now you're working to turn them into lifelong customers and raving fans?

At our company, we refer to where we are in the relationship with a prospect or customer as traffic temperature. To build an effective traffic system, the strategy you need to employ is knowing who you're talking to by defining your target audience, and the stage of your relationship, so that you make the appropriate offer at the right time. Traffic temperature consists of three different levels (see Figure 10-1):

- » **Cold traffic:** These are people who have never heard of you, your brands, or your products or services. You have no relationship with these people, but they are important because they bring new leads and sales to your business. You must build trust, credibility, and authority with your cold traffic. Before they agree to buy from you, they need to prove that your brand is a worthy investment of their time and money. Make ungated offers to valuable content on your blog, podcast, or YouTube channel to cold traffic. Turn to Chapter 3 for more information about ungated offers.
- » **Warm traffic:** These are people who have heard about you or engaged with your brand but haven't bought from you. They may have read your blog, listened to your podcast, or joined your email newsletter. People in the warm traffic stage are evaluating whether they like what you say, and are interested in learning more and possibly purchasing from you. They're deciding whether your company is the best option to solve their problem. They're also evaluating your competitors to see whether they do it better or more cheaply. Make entry point offers and gated offers to these folks to get them in the door without much risk. See Chapter 3 for more information about entry point offers and gated offers.
- » **Hot traffic:** As you've probably guessed, these are people who have bought from you. They may be first-time buyers to repeat buyers. These are the customers you have already spent time, money, and energy to acquire. The biggest mistake that advertisers make is concentrating only on bringing in new leads and sales. The savvy marketer also uses paid traffic to sell more and more often to the customers he already has. Make profit maximizer offers to hot traffic. For more information about profit maximizers, turn to Chapter 3.

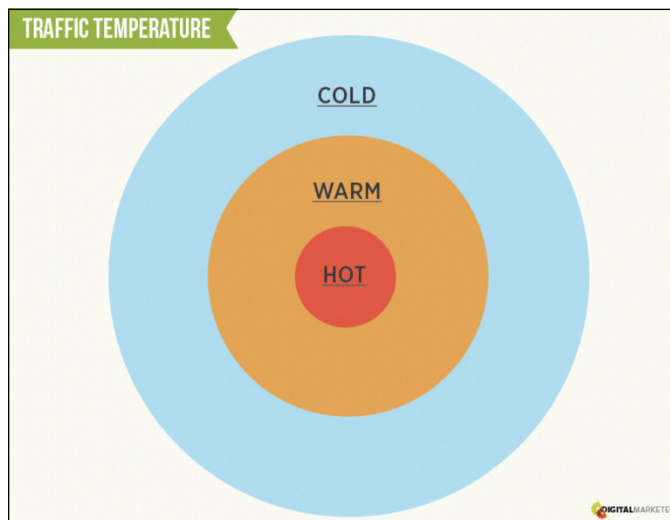


FIGURE 10-1:
The three
stages of traffic
temperature.

In summary, you want to follow these steps for traffic temperature:

1. Introduce yourself to cold traffic with valuable content.
2. Convert warm traffic to leads and low dollar buyers.
3. Sell more and more often to existing buyers.

Choosing the Right Traffic Platform

Before you craft a marketing message, decide what traffic platform your audience is using, which you do by determining where your market is “hanging out” online. The traffic platform you make your offer on is essential to the success of your campaign. Even with the perfect marketing message, if your ad is placed on the wrong traffic platform, your entire campaign will fail. For instance, if your target audience doesn’t use Twitter, you shouldn’t be spending money advertising on it.

You have thousands of traffic stores to choose from, but what traffic store is the best match for your business? If you’re looking to buy traffic, do so from a source that can help you reach your market. To reach your market, you must first define your customer avatar (see Chapter 1 to learn more about creating your customer avatar).

Traffic stores such as Twitter, Pinterest, YouTube, and others have aggregated millions of users, and each platform has slightly different demographics. Use broad demographic information (such as age, gender, and income) to help determine the correct traffic store that your audiences use, and thus the best store to reach them on. Also, research your audiences’ specific interests (such as their hobbies, the books and blogs they read, authority figures they follow, and the pain points they have) to determine how to target your audiences after you’re on the platform.

This research takes time, but when done correctly, it helps you determine both the correct traffic store to advertise on and the message you use to reach out to your audiences. The next section examines the Big Six traffic stores that you can reach your audiences on.

Introducing the Big Six traffic platforms

We say it earlier, but it’s worth saying again here: You have thousands of traffic stores for businesses and marketers to choose from. In this section, however, we discuss the six main traffic stores on the web today:

- » Facebook
- » Twitter
- » Google
- » YouTube
- » Pinterest
- » LinkedIn

Chances are, your market hangs out on one or more of these traffic stores, allowing you to effectively reach out to your target audience. The Big Six are effective traffic stores because

- » They experience a large volume of users and have the necessary resources that give you the capability to scale campaigns.
- » Their ad interfaces are user friendly and easy to use.
- » Their targeting options are (usually) better than other traffic stores on the web. These traffic platforms allow you to target ads to people based on everything from their demographics, interests, the keywords they've typed into a search engine, and the pages they've visited on your website. For example, if you sell swimming pools in San Diego, you might target your ads based on any of the following criteria:
 - People who live in San Diego.
 - People who are interested in water sports.
 - People who typed the query "in ground swimming pool san diego" into a search engine.
 - People who have visited the in-ground swimming pool product page on your website.

You can, in fact, combine these targeting options to, for example, target people living in San Diego who have an interest in water sports.

No matter the experience level or the industry of your business, the Big Six give you effective platforms for reaching almost any market, in almost every part of the globe. In the following sections, we cover the best uses and nuances related to dealing with these traffic stores.

Facebook

With well over 2.6 billion monthly active users (users who have logged in to Facebook within the last 30 days), Facebook allows you to reach almost any market. The Facebook Ads Manager is user friendly and offers a multitude of targeting

options, so you can get really specific when targeting your market, thereby making your ads more personal and effective. Because Facebook is easy to use and fairly inexpensive to buy traffic on, it's a good place to start if you're new to paid traffic or are testing a new strategy. Plus, you can apply many strategies used in Facebook on other advertising platforms.

Ads on Facebook are like hyper-targeted billboards: You're displaying your message in front of your audiences, and hopefully interrupting those audiences from endlessly scrolling. So you need to make sure to put your ads in front of the right people and to give your audiences a reason to stop scrolling and look. Headspace, a meditation app, attempts to do this with a video ad, shown in Figure 10-2.

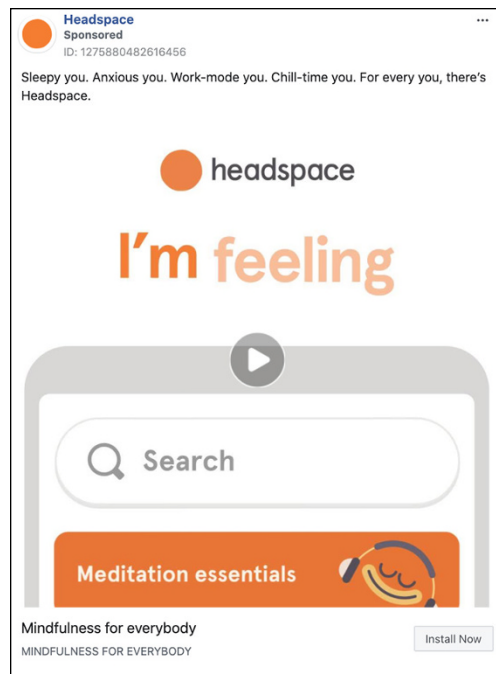


FIGURE 10-2: Headspace uses a video ad to attract attention on Facebook.

Source: <https://www.facebook.com/Headspace/>

Facebook provides many objectives for marketers to select from. Choosing your objective is the most important part when setting up your campaign because it's your way of telling Facebook exactly what you want your campaign to accomplish. Therefore, before you launch your campaign, know your end goal (such as to send people to your website, promote your company Facebook page, increase conversions on your website, get video views, or any of many more possibilities), and align that goal with your Facebook objective. To determine your objective, ask yourself: Who am I targeting and where do I want to send them?

After you complete the first step of setting up your campaign (choosing your objective), you move on to setting up the audience you intend to reach. There are a few different ways you can manage this step; you can hyper-target your audience yourself, or you can let Facebook's algorithm choose for you. If you choose the wrong audience, your Facebook ad is likely to fail or, at the very least, not reach its full potential. To ensure that you reach the right audience, your own targeting needs to be fairly specific. To improve your campaign's specificity, answer the following questions about your target market for *every* ad you plan to run on Facebook:

» **Who are the figures, thought leaders, or big brands in your niche?**

Chances are, members of your audience follow these influencers on Facebook.

» **What books, magazines, newspapers do your ideal customers read?**

» **What events do they attend?**

» **What websites do they frequent?**

» **Where do they live?**

» **What tools do they use?** These tools can range from programs such as Photoshop or Evernote to physical tools such as fishing rods or lawn care equipment.

» **What's specifically unique about this audience?**

Although hyper-targeting can be enticing, Facebook's machine-learning algorithm is incredibly sophisticated nowadays. And, the more you exclude people from your target audience, the smaller your pool of potential leads is. With that said, you should still pay attention to the size of your audience, but trying to manually hyper-target a specific person using interests and exclusions may not always be the best idea. Instead, open up your targeting and let Facebook's AI find the right people.

At our company, we have found the most success, in terms of conversions and high Relevance Scores (the algorithm that Facebook uses to judge the quality of your ad; similar to Google's Quality Score) with our Facebook ads when the audience size is made up of 500,000–1,000,000 people (plus or minus several thousand — it doesn't have to be *exactly* 500,000, for instance; there's wiggle room). This way, you're showing your ad to not only a large enough audience but also a specific one that will find your ad relevant.

If your business is local (as opposed to a national or international company) and you're targeting a specific town, city, state, or region, you don't have to worry about the size of your audience. Local businesses don't need to worry about audience size but instead should be concerned with how you're targeting that

audience. All other businesses that aren't local should focus on how you're targeting your audience *and* the size of your audience.

The next step is to create your ad copy. When writing your ad's copy, speak to your audience based on the pain point you're targeting and where you are in the relationship. For instance, you don't talk to someone you've just met the way you speak to someone you've known for ten years, and the same goes for your copy writing. Think of your ads in the context of where you are in the relationship with your lead or customer.

Next, follow these tips when writing your ad's copy:

- » Grab your target audience's attention by calling out to it. For instance, you might call out to your target city, such as, "Hey, Seattle!" or use what residents call themselves, such as, "Hey, Austinites!" or even call to people by their interests, such as "Hey, amateur wrestling fans!"
- » Within the copy, hit upon a pain point your target audience deals with and then give people a solution (your offer, of course).
- » If you have the room, add a sentence to eliminate doubt and overcome a reason the customer may have for choosing not to buy.
- » Finally, consider what you want people to do after they've finished reading your ad. Include a strong call to action to help move them to the next level.

Next, make sure that the image accompanying your copy portrays and backs up your marketing message. The image ties the ad together and makes the ad feel congruent. You don't want an image that feels as though it came out of left field and has nothing to do with the copy or the offer. The image should stand out and be eye catching but not spammy-looking, so avoid too many arrows or obnoxious colors. Ultimately, you want the image to resonate with your market. If making images isn't your strong suit, or you don't have a graphic designer, consider using tools such as Canva (<https://www.canva.com/>) or outsourcing your graphics with services such as Fiverr (<https://www.fiverr.com/>) or Upwork (<https://www.upwork.com/>) to create professional images for your ads.



TIP

To make sure your ads are approved by Facebook, they need to fit within the spec guidelines. You can find information on the different types, placements, and dimensions of ads by looking at the Facebook Ads Guide (<https://www.facebook.com/business/ads-guide/image/facebook-feed/traffic>).

Figure 10-3 depicts the elements that make up a Facebook ad and what to include.

FIGURE 10-3:
A promoted
tweet from
Liberty Mutual.



Source: <https://twitter.com/LibertyMutual/status/738760608796053504>



TIP

For cold audiences in particular, you don't want your Facebook ad to "scream" that it's an ad; rather, you want the ad to be informative and provide value. Remember that you're building credibility with your audiences. Ad copy that targets cold audiences is often longer than ads for warm or hot audiences. It also contains more information about the offer and what happens when people click the ad. In contrast, your language can be a little more informal and your copy shorter with warm and hot audiences.



TIP

You can find more details and how-to guides from Facebook Blueprint (www.facebook.com/blueprint), an educational resource created by Facebook that offers free online courses to help people take their Facebook campaigns to the next level.

Twitter

With Twitter, you can reach almost any market, and targeting on Twitter is very similar to Facebook. People use Twitter to consume content and expect to find content in their Twitter feed, which makes this a great platform to run traffic to cold audiences. Use your tweets to introduce yourself and drive people to content, such as your blog, that provides value, establishes your brand as an authority, and starts building a relationship with your audiences.

You can create many different paid ads on Twitter, whether you seek to gain more Twitter followers or to generate website clicks and conversions. As with your efforts on Facebook, your Twitter campaign objectives should align with your

overall campaign objective or end goal. Figure 10-3 depicts a promoted tweet from Liberty Mutual that clearly states its benefit and includes a call to action. Notice how the image the company uses is congruent with the copy of the tweet.

To encourage engagement with your tweets (that is, to cause retweets and likes), link to something of value and don't make your tweets super "salesy." The most effective sponsored tweets are the ones with the same look and feel of a regular tweet. They don't mention a product or sell anything. These tweets are less invasive and are known as *native ads*. Native ads follow the form and function of the medium in which they are placed. A native ad is not exclusive to Twitter and can be found on other paid traffic platforms. Native Twitter ads look like any other tweet and consist of good copy that piques interest and links to informative content that drives traffic off the Twitter platform to your predetermined landing page (see Chapter 7 for more on landing pages).

With Twitter, you typically target cold traffic with content to drive awareness for your brands, products and services. Therefore, rather than drive traffic to a traditional sales landing page for your product, drive traffic to informative blog articles that provide value and build credibility. Then, in your article, weave calls to action to a relevant offer that lead people to the next traffic temperature. Return to Chapters 5 and 6 for blogging strategies to use for your Twitter landing pages.



REMEMBER

To be effective, each landing page article needs to have standalone value. In other words, readers derive value from the landing page regardless of whether they take your offer. To avoid having a negative impact on your relationship with a prospect and harming your chances of gaining a customer, be sure that your landing page delivers on the promise you made within your tweet. For instance, if you tweet about bridal shower ideas and the link you provide doesn't deliver, people will view you as less trustworthy and associate your content with negative click bait.



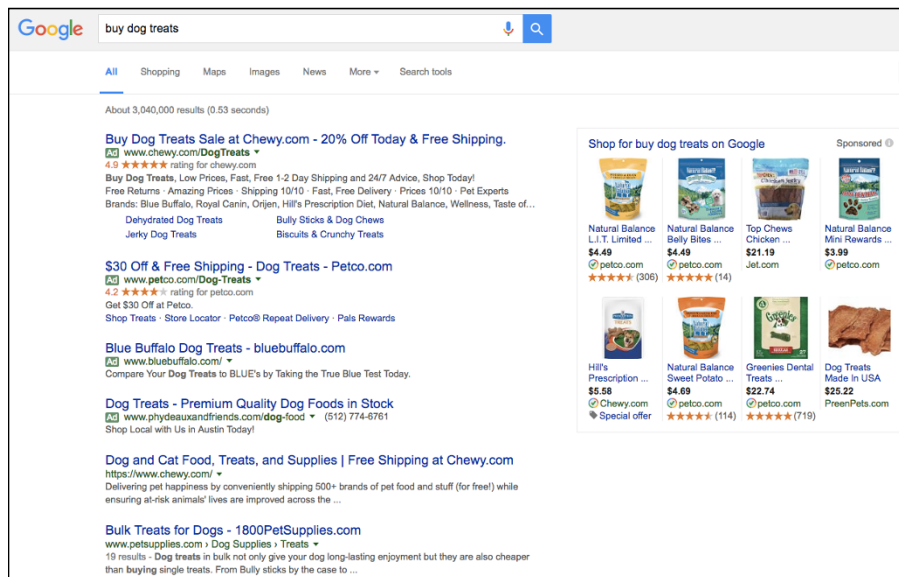
TIP

When using Twitter, look for tweets that perform exceptionally well. If one of your tweets results in high engagement, the tweet will likely do well as an advertisement. Consider investing money in that tweet and promoting it to your cold audiences.

Google

Google Ads is a great traffic platform because you can present ads to people when they are actively looking for a solution. Google's Ads program shows ads to people based on the keywords they type into the Google search engine. For example, if a searcher types "buy dog treats" into Google, a company that sells dog treats can place a bid to show an ad on the results page, as shown in Figure 10-4. People use Google to research products and services, and the search queries they type in offer insight into the pain points they face and the solutions and benefits they are looking for.

FIGURE 10-4:
Ads appear for
the search query
“buy dog treats”
on the Google
platform.



Source: <https://www.google.com/webhp?sourceid=chrome-instant&ion=1&espv=2&ie=UTF-8&q=buy%20dog%20treats>

In comparison to other platforms, Google ads are seen as less interruptive and invasive, and they require less of an introduction to your prospects because people are actively searching for a solution. Although Ads is generally more expensive than other traffic stores, it is very effective at generating high-quality leads and customers: Even though they may never have heard of you, these potential customers actively seek solutions and are often more open to becoming leads and customers.

Here are some aspects to note about Google Ads:

- » **You need a goal:** Ads isn't a platform you just get on to run some traffic and test your market. Deciding on a goal before you begin your campaign is imperative. If you're new to this, you may want to start with another traffic store that is cheaper, such as Facebook, to test the market before you graduate to Ads.
- » **You pay based on clicks:** You pay only when someone actually clicks your ad (which helps to control your budget).
- » **You can target by location:** There's a big opportunity for geo-targeting for local businesses, so you can specifically "speak" to local markets. This feature works well for both local businesses and larger companies looking to segment a national or international campaign.

You should begin with researching the keywords that you intend to bid on for your ad. When conducting keyword research, remember these tips:

- » Use tools to help you find keyword ideas and estimate how the keywords may perform. Google Keyword Planner (<https://ads.google.com/home/tools/keyword-planner/>) is a free tool provided by Google Ads.
- » Run a search on Google of keywords and keyword phrases related to your business and see what are some of the first Ads to appear.
- » Use spy tools such as iSpionage (<https://www.ispionage.com/>), SEMrush (<https://www.semrush.com/>) or SpyFu (<https://www.spyfu.com/>) to research your competitors or other companies in your niche to gain insight on the keywords they're targeting.

As you conduct your keyword research, be aware that you can set four types of parameters on your keywords within Ads. These are known as keyword match types. You use them to set and control which searchers trigger your ad to appear after they've typed in a search query. Here are the keyword match types, along with examples for each:

- » **Exact match:** This match type means that someone has to type your keyword or keyword phrase *exactly* as it appears in your campaign in order for your ad to be displayed. You designate exact match by putting square brackets around a keyword. For example:

```
[lawn service]
```

If you have the exact-match keyword [lawn service] in your Ads campaign, the only time your ad appears is when someone types the search query *lawn service* into Google.

- » **Phrase match:** Your keyword must appear in the *same order* as it appears in your campaign to trigger your ad. Phrase match is designated by quotation marks around the keyword, as in the following:

```
"lawn service"
```

If you have the phrase "lawn service" in your Ads campaign, your ad could be triggered for the following search queries:

- *best lawn service*
- *lawn service Austin*
- *Dan's lawn service and landscaping*

The preceding terms trigger your phrase match ad because the words *lawn* and *service* appear next to each other in the search query. However, with phrase match, your ad would *not* be triggered by the following search queries:

- *lawn mowing service*
- *lawn and landscaping service*

Your ad would not be triggered by those search queries because the words *lawn* and *service* do *not* appear in the *same order* as they do in the campaign.

» **Broad match:** With broad match, Google shows your ad for similar phrases to and relevant variations from the keyword. This includes plurals, synonyms, misspellings, and related searched and relevant variations. In contrast to the other keyword match types, broad match has no symbol designation.

If your broad match keyword is *lawn service*, Google may trigger your ad for search queries that include

- *lawn mowing service prices*
- *lawn services near me*
- *lawn service name ideas*
- *creative lawn service names*

While this can place your ad in front of a large audience, it may not place it in front of the *right* audience. Because broad match can trigger so much, we don't recommend it for someone just starting out in Ads.

» **Broad match modifier (BMM):** This keyword type triggers your ad for close variations, such as misspellings (but not synonyms), in any order. BMM falls between broad match and phrase match in that you have more control than broad match, but it's not quite as restrictive as phrase match. You designate a BMM with a plus sign (+) in front of your keywords:

```
+lawn +service
```

Google knows keywords with the plus sign in front of them *must* appear somewhere within the search query, but not necessarily in the order they appear in the campaign. Search queries that may trigger this ad include the following:

- *lawn mowing service*
- *lawn and landscaping service*
- *professional lawn care services*

After you research your keywords and decide on the keyword match type to use in your campaign, you select how much to bid for your keywords. Remember these tips when choosing your bidding strategy in Ads:

- Select the Manually Set My Bid For Clicks option, which allows you to be in control of your budget. Otherwise, your budget is automated by Google Ads.
- When first starting a campaign, use a default bid of \$2– \$3 until you can see how competitive your keywords are.
- Set a daily budget, again to keep your budget under your control.

When you're finally ready to write your ad, follow these tips and tricks to create copy for Google ads:

- » **Include a call to action.** What is the ultimate action you want your target audience to take after people have read your ad? Tell them what you want them to do in your ad. Calls to action can include "call now," "download your free report," and "order today," among other possibilities.
- » **Use your keywords.** Include the keywords you are bidding on within the ad's copy. Not only does this help with your Quality Score (the algorithm that Google uses to determine how much you ultimately pay for a click), it also bolds the keywords that match a person's search query, which makes your ad stand out more.
- » **Ask a question.** Consider using questions to call out to your audience. Questions often capture people's attention more than a statement does. For instance, instead of the copy "Get rid of termites" try "Termite infestation?" Or instead of "Experienced and insured plumber in St. Louis" try "Looking for a reliable St. Louis plumber?"
- » **Reference holidays or local events.** When your ad mentions upcoming events or holidays, it seems more timely and relevant to searchers.
- » **Focus on benefits and speak to your prospects' pain points.** Don't include your product's specifications, such as size, color, or even what the product does, within your ad. That doesn't entice people to click; rather, people want to know how your product can make their lives better. Within your ad, focus on the emotional outcomes your product provides, not the technical specs. (You include tech specs within the product description on your sales landing page, as we describe in great detail in Chapter 7.)

YouTube

YouTube is great traffic platform for building relationships with customers and prospects. Because of the different kinds of ads you can create with this traffic

platform, you can build relationships and move people from cold prospects to hot repeat buyers, all within the YouTube platform. For instance, you can use YouTube to establish yourself as an authority and give value to your market, and then send people to more content to learn from, such as another video or a blog post, after which you retarget them (we detail retargeting in the latter half of this chapter) with video ads to make an entry point offer. See Chapter 3 for more information about entry point offers.

Note that people are conditioned to skip YouTube ads. With the advertisements that play before someone else's video, like the one from GoPro camera company pictured in Figure 10-5, you have only five seconds to grab your audience's attention before people click the Skip button.

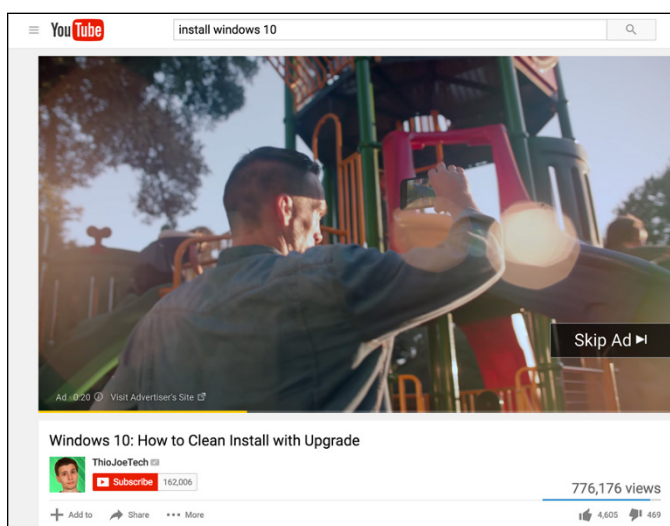


FIGURE 10-5:
A GoPro YouTube
ad with a Skip
button.

After the five-second threshold, people often have the chance to skip your ad, and if you haven't given them a reason to stay, your audiences will likely skip your ad to view the content they originally came to watch. To keep them from skipping, do one or more of the following within the first five seconds:

- » Call out to your audience to grab people's attention. For instance, you can call out to your market based on where people live (city or state) or address one of their interests.
- » Ask them a question they can relate to and identify with. For example, a home improvement company might place an advertisement on a video about replacing a bathroom sink and open that video ad with the question, "Are you updating your bathroom?"

- » Speak to a pain point they are facing or a benefit they are seeking.
- » Entertain them.
- » Give your target audience a reason to stay by immediately providing value so that people want to visit your channel or website to learn more.

Other ways to ensure that your ad grabs your target audience's attention is to include an enticing thumbnail image (the static image overlaying your video before someone plays it) and a strong video title, also called a headline. The title and the thumbnail explain and demonstrate what your video is about. Your thumbnail image is one of the first things people see, so you want to make sure that your first impression is appealing and eye catching. If creating professional-looking images is outside your skill set, use services such as Fiverr or tools such as Canva to make high-quality thumbnail images. Then back up your image with an engaging title or headline. Include your targeted keywords within the headline (and within the video's description) to improve your targeting.

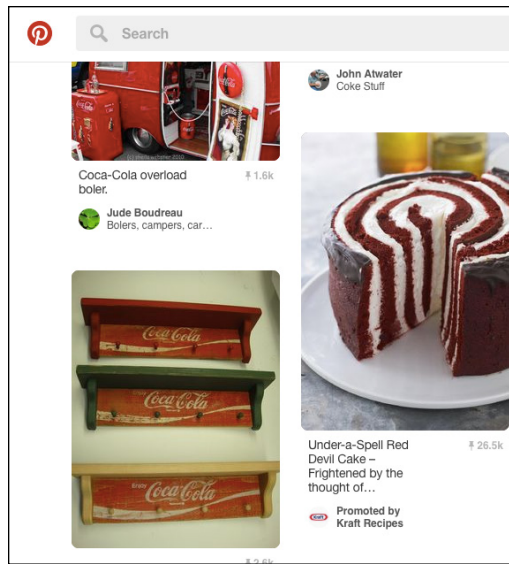
Pinterest

This social network has more than 367 million monthly active users, with nearly one-third of those users living in the United States. It's therefore an ideal traffic store for those advertising in America. Pinterest users are heavily female: Women make up about 71 percent of Pinterest users. Although Pinterest is an ideal platform to target women living in America, Pinterest is growing both internationally and among adult male users.

Pinterest users are in an open-to-buy mindset. In fact, 93 percent of Pinterest users plan purchases by using Pinterest. Studies have also found that when Pinterest traffic was referred to Shopify, it resulted in an average purchase of \$50 from Shopify. As a traffic store, Pinterest has a lot of potential, to say the least.

To advertise on Pinterest, you create what is known as a *promoted pin* (you can learn about the different types here: <https://business.pinterest.com/en/pinterest-ad-formats>) which is an advertisement that allows you to target your market based on demographics, locations, and devices used, as well as people's interests and the search queries that people type in. Pinterest, like Google, is run on a cost-per-click (CPC) basis with a budget that you can specify, and you pay only when someone clicks through the pin to your website. Similar to Twitter, Pinterest is a native advertising system; create advertisements that blend in with the platform so that the ad follows the form and function of any other piece of content on the platform. Figure 10-6 depicts a promoted pin from Kraft, in the right half of the figure, for its recipes board.

FIGURE 10-6:
A promoted pin
from Kraft.



Source: <https://www.pinterest.com/pin>

Before you create your promoted pin, research the keywords you intend to target. You can do your keyword research right on the Pinterest platform. Start by typing in the main keyword for your market in the Pinterest search bar. As you type, Pinterest gives you suggested searches, which are the most commonly searched queries that include your keyword on Pinterest. This technique helps you focus in on the keywords to target on Pinterest. You can also use online tools, such as SpinKeywords, to research keywords for your promoted pin campaign.

Each promoted pin is allowed only up to 20 keywords, so when selecting the keywords you want to target, choose the most relevant keywords. If you choose to target more than 20 keywords, your promoted pin may be denied by Pinterest. Therefore, aim for 15 to 20 keywords per promoted pin.

Next, when creating your promoted pin, select your image with care. The Pinterest platform is all about big, beautiful images, and for your promoted pin to stand out, you must use an image that is both eye catching and of high quality. Within your image, consider adding a simple, clear text overlay to your image that can serve as a headline and provide context to the image. The size and shape of your image matters on Pinterest; this platform is vertically oriented, so although horizontal images can work for promoted pins, strive to use vertical images whenever possible. An image size of 600 pixels by 900 pixels is a good place to start for your pin image.

You want your promoted pin to be helpful, beautiful, and actionable. After you select an image that helps you create such a pin, write a detailed description that gives value to your market, addresses a pain point, and demonstrates the benefit of the product you're featuring in your promoted pin. Remember that people don't

care about the product's unique selling points (USP) at this point; rather, they care about what the product does for them and how it can make their life better. Address these concerns within your promoted pin's description.



TIP

Within the first 75–100 characters of your pin's description, include the link to the product's landing page (see Chapter 7 for more on landing pages). Including this link early in your text ensures that your link appears above the fold, allowing your landing page to be one click away from the Pinterest platform.



WARNING

Don't use more than four individual images per pin. You want the images to be big and beautiful so that your promoted pin stands out, and having more than four images creates a busy pin with small images. If you decide to have more than one image in a promoted pin, be sure that each image has a clear focus and a theme. You don't want to sell an assortment of random products in a pin; instead, the products should complement each other.

LinkedIn

LinkedIn stands out from other traffic stores because it's geared toward a specific market. LinkedIn is professionally focused and business-to-business (B2B) centric. It's a powerful resource to employ for lead generation and running ads to cold traffic, though, just as Twitter and Facebook are.

You can choose among a multitude of ways to target your audience within LinkedIn, from demographics, such as age and gender, to job title, to skills that users have listed in their profiles, such as "customer service" or "social media marketing." And with more than 700 million users and counting, LinkedIn offers a large market to reach.

How large should your audience size be when running traffic on LinkedIn? Some marketers argue that 300,000 is the sweet spot. However, in contrast to your Facebook audience, your audience size on LinkedIn doesn't need to be an issue. The market is smaller and more specified on the LinkedIn platform, and the target is business professionals. Other traffic stores, such as Facebook and Twitter, encompass a much broader audience. When you advertise on LinkedIn, the size of the audience is less important. The main concern, just as with all traffic stores, is putting the right message in front of the right audience. For instance, if you want to target CEOs, don't worry about the audience size, but focus instead on creating an ad and an offer that CEOs will find relevant.

As with the other traffic stores, your LinkedIn ad needs the following:

- » Specific copy that calls out to your audience and is relevant to it
- » A professional, captivating image
- » A call to action that moves the audience to the next step

LinkedIn has come a long way, and they now offer a wide variety of campaign types. One way to drive traffic on LinkedIn is to sponsor content and send people to your content, such as your blog posts. To be effective, the content you're sending traffic to should educate and give value to your audience. Then, within the blog, provide calls to action or banner ads for an offer that your LinkedIn audience finds relevant. This strategy is one way for you to obtain a return on investment (ROI) from your LinkedIn campaigns.

You can also use inMail to send sponsored messages directly to the inbox of people you are targeting. They also have programmatic display ads, which display custom content for the viewer, such as their profile photo and name in the ad.

Although LinkedIn is one of the more expensive platforms, the specific nature of this traffic store makes it generate high-quality leads that are open to your message.

Choosing the right traffic platform

You have many traffic stores to choose from, and each one has its strengths. In summary, here are the scenarios in which to consider using one or more of the Big Six:

- » **Facebook:** This platform can work in almost any market, unless the market isn't approved by the Facebook TOS (terms of service), such as the vaping industry (visit Facebook's advertising policies for more details on its TOS at <https://www.facebook.com/policies/ads/>). With Facebook, you want to utilize a process known as retargeting, which we define and explain in the next section.
- » **Twitter:** Advertise on Twitter when you want to target a younger market or one that is highly tech savvy. Twitter is a large platform with a lot of users, so it can work in almost any market.
- » **Google:** Use Google if you have a proven offer that has performed well on other traffic sources, or an offer that is difficult to target in terms of prospects' interests or demographics and thus requires keyword targeting. With Google, you want to engage in retargeting.
- » **YouTube:** This traffic store can work in almost any market, especially if you have an offer that requires demonstration or keyword targeting. Again, with this platform, you want to engage in retargeting.
- » **Pinterest:** Think about using promoted pins when you're selling physical products, particularly to women, or if you're creating content with lots of original or curated images.
- » **LinkedIn:** Go to LinkedIn when you're selling high-dollar B2B products or services. Consider also advertising on this platform when you're promoting a webinar to a B2B audience or want to reach people by their job title.

Setting up Boomerang Traffic

Needless to say, not everyone who comes to your site will convert on the first visit; in fact, for most sites, only about 2 percent of web traffic converts on the first visit. So how do you get the other 98 percent to “boomerang” and come back to your site? You do it through a strategy known as ad retargeting.

For instance, say that you go to the online shoe and clothing store Zappos. You look at a pair of shoes and then leave Zappos without buying. Next you visit the *Huffington Post* to read an article and notice an ad for the same pair of shoes that you were just considering on Zappos.com. You are being retargeted. In this section, we go into more detail about what retargeting is and how to employ it in the following sections.

Defining ad retargeting

After people have visited your site, sales page, or social media page, you can safely assume that they’re interested in learning more. Even if they left without buying, you can also assume that they didn’t say no; they just didn’t have time to take action right then or needed more time to think about your offer. To encourage people to return to your site (like a boomerang), you use the paid traffic strategy of retargeting.

The goal of retargeting (sometimes called remarketing) is to bring people back to your site and get them one step closer to converting. You do this by serving former visitors ads based on their prior engagement with your site. With retargeting, you don’t try to change prior visitors’ minds; rather, you remind them about your offer.

Although other forms of retargeting exist, we focus on the most frequently used: site-based retargeting. *Site-based retargeting* uses tracking pixels and cookies to serve your ad to previous site visitors, as we explain in the next section.

Setting cookies and pixels

A *tracking pixel* (simply referred to as a pixel) is a piece of code that you place on your website to trigger a *cookie*, which is the text file that stores information about the user’s visit to your site. The cookie uses a simple JavaScript code and allows ad networks and traffic platforms to identify users when they visit another site, and then serves them targeted ads based on your preferences as an advertiser. Simply put, the tracking pixel delivers information to a server, and the cookie stores information in a user’s browser so that the server can read it again later. The cookie stores the site visit but does not store any sensitive information, such as the site visitor’s name, address, or any information that might personally identify the visitor.

When people come to your site, a cookie is placed, and eventually, users leave and visit other sites. The cookie lets your retargeting platform, such as Facebook or Google, know when one of these “cookied” visitors goes to a site where retargeting ads can be shown. If ad space is available, your retargeting ad may be shown. This entire process is automated and occurs within a fraction of a second.

When done right, retargeting allows you to make relevant offers to specific audiences, and the more specific and relevant the offer, the more likely the offer is to resonate with your audience and lead to a conversion. The next section tells you how to create specific retargeting offers.

Segmenting with content

The biggest mistake that a digital marketer can make with retargeting campaigns is to assume that all visitors are alike and show every visitor the same ad. The key to successful retargeting is audience segmentation (we also discuss content segmentation in Chapter 4). Failing to segment your visitors can lead to poor campaign results and the waste of many of your impressions (the views on your ads) and ad spend. For instance, you wouldn’t want to retarget a user who has viewed vegan recipes with a banner ad for a steakhouse restaurant.

When you segment your audiences, you can identify and understand their intent. Segmentation allows you to retarget and send offers based on a person’s interests, thereby personalizing the retargeting experience and making the ad that much more compelling.

To segment your audience, examine your website or blog and divide its content into like categories or topics. For example, a food blog might separate its content by types of lifestyles such as vegan, gluten-free, and vegetarian. When people visit content about vegetarian food, they are showing interest in vegetarian food. Do you have an offer that is relevant to a vegetarian? If so, retarget those that visit your vegetarian content with that relevant and specific offer.

Troubleshooting Paid Traffic Campaigns

After you’ve set up a paid traffic campaign, let it run for three to five days so that you can start collecting data. When that time is up, you should assess and troubleshoot your campaign. Although you’re looking for problems or why goals aren’t being met, troubleshooting doesn’t necessarily mean that something is wrong with the campaign. The goal of troubleshooting a campaign is to fix any problems that may have arisen since its launch, but also to look for ways to optimize the campaign and possibly, if justifiable, to scale the campaign.

We examine four areas to focus on and the steps to take when troubleshooting a paid traffic campaign, as follows:

- » The offer
- » The targeting
- » The ad copy and creative
- » The ad's congruency

With paid traffic, a lot of trial and error is involved in a campaign, even if you've done everything right. At our company, for example, for every ten paid campaigns that we run, only one to two break even or turn a profit. But that doesn't mean that you should throw away an underperforming campaign and start all over. With some digging, you can find what's holding back the campaign and get it back on track.



WARNING

Make sure to examine each of the following areas one at a time so that you can isolate the specific issue of your campaign. If you try to assess all the areas at one time, you won't understand the root cause or what ultimately fixed your campaign, so you may end up facing the same problem in the future. Implement one step, run your ad for an additional five days and collect more data, and then move on to the next steps if necessary.

Read on for more details about troubleshooting each of these areas.

Strengthening your offer

The first aspect to focus on when your campaign isn't performing as expected is your offer. Ask yourself: Do people want what you're selling? If you don't offer something that your market actually wants or needs, you won't get conversions. To see whether your offer is appealing, answer these three questions:

- » Are you solving a problem for a specific group of people?
- » Does a specific need exist for what you're offering?
- » Are you offering your market value?

If your answer is "No" to any of these questions, you've already found your problem.

No matter how compelling your landing page copy is or how attention grabbing your image may be, the best marketing campaign in the world can't solve an offer issue. This is why your offer is so crucial and is the key to the success or failure of any marketing campaign. A poorly executed marketing campaign with a great offer usually outperforms a great marketing campaign with a poor offer. If a poor

offer is your problem, you need to come up with a new and better offer before you run traffic to it. See Chapter 3 for more on crafting winning offers.

Tweaking your targeting

Another big culprit of a struggling ad campaign is your targeting. If you've concluded that your offer isn't the problem and have proof to back that up, examine whether you're targeting the right people. Regardless of whether you have the best offer and marketing message, putting your offer in front of the wrong audience means that your campaign will fail. Are you targeting people who will actually buy?

The biggest targeting mistake you can make is to get too specific, or too broad in fear of missing out on potential prospects. If you're in doubt about the size of the audience you're targeting, go a bit smaller. Then, if the campaign meets or exceeds expectations for this smaller audience, you can scale it and make your audience a little broader. Also, don't forget that platforms like Facebook have really great AI that can do a great job targeting for you.

If you believe that your targeting is off, reassess your customer avatar. You might have a misconception of your audience. Go back and make sure that you're being specific enough and that your information on your audience is correct.

Another big issue that can impede your targeting is to advertise on the wrong traffic platform. You might be placing ads on a platform where your market doesn't hang out online. Return to the "Choosing the Right Traffic Platform" section, earlier in this chapter, to help make sure that you're putting your ad on a platform where your market is active.

Scrutinizing your ad copy and creative

After confirming that your offer is enticing and you're putting your offer in front of the right people, examine your marketing message. The ad copy and the creative (the image) are the segue between your offer and your target market. The copy and creative ensures that people can see the end benefit of your offer. If your marketing message doesn't catch your target audience's attention and give people a reason to click, your campaign will fail because you aren't generating traffic.

Inspect your ad copy to make sure that it does the following:

- » Calls out to your audience
- » Hits a pain point that your audience experiences
- » Gives your market a solution or a benefit (a reason to click)

Next, the image needs

- » To be eye catching
- » To correspond with your marketing message

Overall, verify that your creative and your copy don't say different things. They need to match or you risk confusing your audience. In addition, this matchup helps make your ad copy and your creative more compelling, which also leads to the next area to troubleshoot.

Checking the congruency of your campaign

Finally, you need to troubleshoot the congruency of your ad as you move prospects to the next step of your marketing funnel. For instance, after people click your ad and visit your landing page, do they get what they expected? If your landing page doesn't have the same look and feel as your ad, people may think they've landed in the wrong place or that you won't deliver on the benefit promised in the ad. Something seems wrong to site visitors, causing them to click the Back button in their browser.

So not only do you want each step of the campaign to build off the previous, you also want the campaign to remain congruent throughout. To maintain congruence, consider keeping the following elements in your ad design consistent throughout the campaign's path:

- » Color scheme
- » Layout
- » Imagery
- » Font type, size, and color

Next, if you make an offer or touch on a pain point or benefit within the ad, reference that again on the landing page. Make sure that these items appear quickly and aren't buried down the page or you risk losing the prospect. The easiest way to assure the prominence of these items is with the copy: Use the exact same language from your ad to your landing page headline, subheadline, and body copy. Also include the same images from the ad within the landing page.

By ensuring that your ad and your landing page both reflect the same benefit, pain point, offer, and design, you can maintain familiarity and preserve congruency.